



CITY OF SUGAR LAND

Jury Summons Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Where are names obtained for jurors?

Names are gathered from the Voter Registration records. Only people within the corporate city limits are eligible to serve on a jury for Sugar Land Municipal Court.

Q: How do I claim an exemption?

To claim an exemption from jury service, you must complete the front of the jury summons and claim the appropriate exemption on the back of the form. Mail it (to Sugar Land Municipal Court, P. O. Box 110, Sugar Land, Texas 77478); fax it to 281-275-2648; bring it in person to 1200 Highway 6 and present it to the clerks or place it in the drop box outside the building before or after business hours of 8-5

Exemptions you may claim are:

1. you are over 70 years of age;
2. you have legal custody of a child or children younger than 10 years of age and service on the jury would require leaving the child or children without adequate supervision;
3. you are a student at a public or private high school;
4. you are enrolled and attend college;
5. you are an officer or an employee of the senate, the house of representatives, or any department, commission, board, office or other agency in the legislative branch of state government;
6. you are the primary caretaker of a person who is an invalid unable to care for himself or herself. (This exemption does not apply to health care workers.);
7. you have served as a juror in the county during the 24-month period prior to the date you are required to appear for this summons. (*Applies only to counties with population of at least 200,000 unless the county uses a jury*)

plan under Section 62.011, Government Code, and the period authorized under Section 62.001(b)(6) exceeds two years.) or,

8. you have been summoned for service in a county with a population of at least 250,000 and you have served as a petit juror in the county during the three-year period preceding the date you are to appear for jury service.
9. you are a member of the U.S. military forces serving on active duty and deployed to a location away from your home station and out of your county of residence.

****You are not required to claim an exemption. It is your choice.**

Q: How do I determine if I'm qualified to serve as a juror?

On the back of the jury summons, it states the requirements of being a juror:

1. be at least 18 years of age;
2. be a citizen of this state and a resident of the county in which you are to serve as a juror;
3. be qualified under the Constitution and laws to vote in the county in which you are to serve as a juror (*Note: you DO NOT have to be registered to vote to be qualified to vote*);
4. be of sound mind and good moral character;
5. be able to read and write;
6. not have served as a juror for six days during the proceeding three months in the county court or during the preceding six months in the district court;
7. not have been convicted of theft or any felony; and
8. not be under indictment or other legal accusation of a misdemeanor theft, felony theft or any other felony charge.
9. be a resident of the municipality for which the Court is established (Government Code, Section 62.501; specific to municipal courts)

Q: How do I claim a disqualification?

To claim a disqualification from jury service, you must complete the front of the jury summons form and claim the appropriate disqualification on the back of the form. Mail it (to Sugar Land Municipal Court, P. O. Box 110, Sugar Land, Texas 77478); fax it to 281-275-2648; bring it in person to 1200 Highway 6 and present it to the clerks or place it in the drop box outside the building before or after business hours of 8-5

NOTE: If you claim a disqualification or exemption based on the lack of citizenship or lack of residence you may no longer be eligible to vote in the county in which you are to serve as juror.

Q: Can I be penalized by my employer for missing work and serving as a juror?

A private employer may not terminate the employment of a permanent employee because the employee serves as a juror. An employee whose employment is terminated in violation of this section is entitled to return to the same employment that the employee held when summoned for jury service if the employee, as soon as practical after release from jury service, gives the employer actual notice that the employee intends to return. (Civil Practice and Remedies Code, Section 122.001). Terminating an employee who performs jury duty is punishable by up to 180 days in jail and/or a fine not to exceed \$2000 (Civil Practice and Remedies Code, Section 122.002).

Q: What could happen if I don't appear on the date of my jury summons?

A person who fails to comply with this summons is subject to a contempt action punishable by a fine or not less than \$100 nor more than \$1,000 (Government Code, Section 62.0141). Additionally, a person shall be fined not less than \$10 nor more than \$100 if the person: (1) fails to attend court in obedience to the notice without reasonable excuse; or (2) files a false claim of exemption from jury service (Government Code, Section 62.111).

Q: Is there a dress code in the courtroom?

All persons entering the courtroom should be dressed in clothing reasonably befitting the dignity and solemnity of the court proceedings. You may want to bring a light sweater because the courtroom is sometimes chilly.

Q: What if I don't qualify for an exemption or disqualification but am unable to attend jury duty on my assigned date:

Please complete front of the jury summons and mail it (to Sugar Land Municipal Court, P. O. Box 110, Sugar Land, Texas 77478); fax it to 281-275-2648; bring it in person to 1200 Highway 6 and present it to the clerks or place it in the drop box outside the building before or after business hours of 8-5. Please enclose a letter stating the reason why you're not able to serve.

Q: How will I know if I've been excused?

Exemptions, disqualifications and excuses will be posted on the Municipal Court web site. Please note that your request MUST be in writing. Telephone communication is not sufficient. If you wish to communicate with the jury coordinator regarding your request, please E-mail her at klaird@sugarlandtx.gov.

Q: Will I be compensated for serving as a juror?

Everyone who appears for jury service will receive a check in the amount of \$6.00 for their jury service. You will not receive this money on the day of service—you will receive it in the mail after your jury service.

Q: Will I be required to appear for more than one day for jury service?

No, you will only be required to serve for one afternoon. Occasionally trials last into the early evening, however, you will never be required to return on another day. All trials are concluded on the date of trial.

Q: What will I be allowed to do during downtime?

Cell phones and pagers must be turned off when you're in the courtroom, however, when you're in the lobby waiting to be called into the courtroom, you may use them. Also, you may bring a book or other handwork would help pass the time. You may want to bring some change for use in the vending machines for a soft drink or snack.

Q: I do not live in Sugar Land but I was summoned for jury service. What do I do?

Please fill out the front of the jury summons and claim the appropriate disqualification. Voter Registration will be notified of your new address and they will remove you from their records. You may also notify them yourself at: <http://www.co.fort-bend.tx.us> (select online services, voter registration). Please follow previously mentioned instructions for returning your summons and disqualification to Sugar Land Municipal Court.